Panchayati Raj

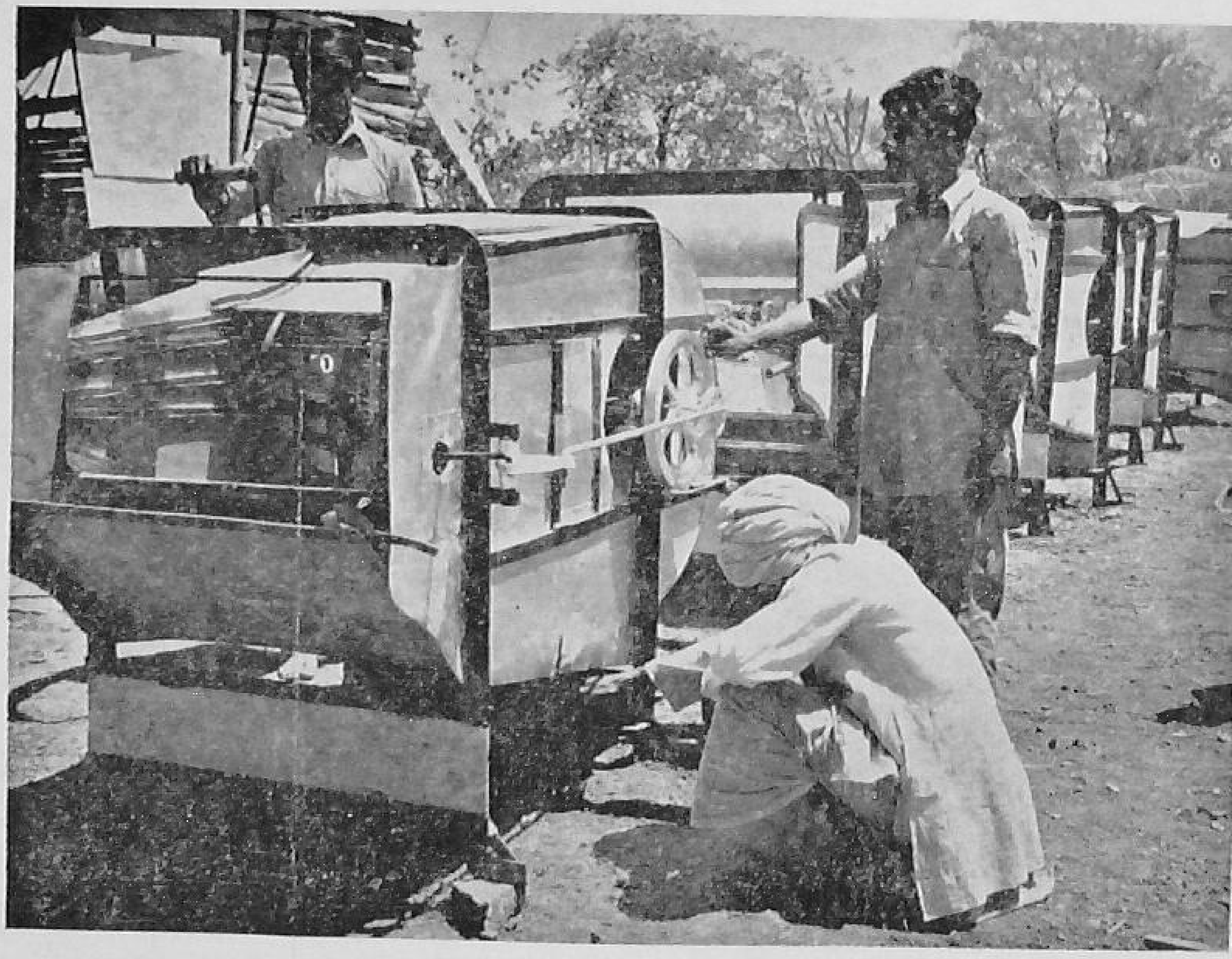
MAY 1965

Happy, smiling faces of two children from a village in Lahaul, Punjab, where a new life is taking place under Panchayati Raj

(See inside)

THREE FACES OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

School children levelling a road at Dhansal Community Project in Jammu



Testing a winnowing and dehusking machine manufactured at the Cooperative Iron Works of the people of Malikhedi village in Madhya Pradesh

One hundred and twenty houses in a planned layout sprang up in place of mud huts at Shamaspur village near Delhi as a result of the determination of the villagers to improve their lot. Picture shows a village housewife plastering the floor at dawn.

VOL. VI MAY 1965 No. 2
VAISAKHA 1887

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EDITOR : A. P. SHOME

BUSINESS NOTICE

Single Copy : 15 P.
Annual : Rs. 1.25

All enquiries regarding agencies and rates of subscription and advertisements may be addressed to the Publications Division, Old Secretariat, Delhi-6. Editorial correspondence may be addressed to the Editor, *Panchayati Raj*, Ministry of Community Development & Co-operation, Krishi Bhavan, New Delhi.

LETTERS

MUTUAL RESPONSIBILITY

Sir,

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT Programme, being quite old in the country, it is quite essential that the officials and non-officials in the Community Development movement, particularly at the block and village levels have to understand the objectives and methods of the Programme. Otherwise, the effect of the Programme in the use of extension and group methods for inducing the village people to accept and apply the tested and proved findings to improve their daily ways of living and their means of livelihood, would go a waste.

The villagers generally think that it is the duty and sole responsibility of the Government to introduce and carry out the Community Development Programme. They seldom realise that the objective of this programme is to assist each village, first in having effective panchayats, cooperatives and schools and through these village institutions to plan and work for increasing agricultural production, improving existing village crafts and industries and organising new ones, providing minimum essential health services, required educational facilities for children and adults, and recreational facilities, improving housing and family living conditions and providing programmes for village women and youth.

It may take some time to educate the people to understand the Community Development Programme and its underlying philosophy and methods of work. The role of the Block staff is very important in this sacred task. They should make the people understand and accept it as their programme. Then there will be an assured development of the programme and thereby of the village. The Block staff including the leader must know and know well the village people in the Block area. They should also realise the important role played by Panchayat Samitis in attaining the goal of the Community Development Programme. It should be one of the duties of the Block Development Officers to come in contact with the Panchayats and have a cordial relation with their members.

The officials and non-officials must have tact, patience and experience of the rural problems and try to introduce slowly and gradually the new scientific ideas. They have to make the village people conscious and make them think for a change and thereby they will have a good chance to put them on the right path. They should never condemn the existing practices, but suggest them that there is another way too, which may be explained and discussed.

The establishment of Panchayati Raj has given the people the responsibility for both planned programme and execution. The Community Development staff must have a continuous responsibility for educating village people in making Panchayati Raj effective. In a people's programme, it is essential that the people should be encouraged and guided to think significantly and speak forcefully and that their voices be heard and listened to by all who have an official place in the programme.

Yours etc.
A. Masana Chetty
President,
Taluk Development Board

31-3-65
Kollega,
MYSORE

MELUR PANCHAYAT FORGES AHEAD

OUR JEEP was moving along the village road slowly. The tall coconut and arecanut trees greeted us. As far as the eyes could see there were trees and trees and pepper vines. They had a magnetic charm. I could never take my eyes away from them. "Perhaps you would like to know how this road was built." I was startled when I heard the voice of the Panchayat President, "I would love to," I said. "Well it is quite an interesting story," he began.

When the construction of the road was taken up in the village, the land owners were vociferous with objections. But all of them had been persuaded to realise the utility of the scheme and they had agreed to part with the required land willingly. Not land alone, they had even come forward with shramdan to see the project through. But the richest landlord of the place had a different view. Well, land was his and why should he part with it for the benefit of others. Two furlongs of land belonging to him could not be obtained and so the road remained unfinished. Days passed. The president of the Panchayat tried in vain to have the land from the rich landlord.

One morning the arrogant landlord tripped in the bathroom. His leg and head were bruised. The president of the Panchayat on hearing the news rushed to the landlord's house with other members of the Panchayat.

The ambulance was called but it had to be parked two furlongs away from the house of the landlord. There was no other alternative but to carry the landlord in a stretcher to the waiting ambulance. But none was willing to carry the load of 250 lbs. for two furlongs. The slender bodied president came forward. His example was soon followed. With hard labour through jungle and overgrowth they carried the stretcher to the ambulance.

After some days, the bruises healed. The landlord returned home completely cured. He ordered straight for the Panchayat president to be brought. When he came the landlord contributed Rs. 101 for the scheme and also the land for completion of the road.

We moved on. Near the road, small channels were flowing, small ripples created an enchanting music. "Where is the origin of these channels which embrace the roads, houses and the plantain fields?" I asked.

"These are the channels from the Chalakudy Dam?", the president informed me. "The water is rushing to quench the thirst of the dry field all around."

Once again I stared at the smiling green all around with wonder.

Melur Panchayat comprising of eight villages, Muringur, Kaladi, Melur, Pulani, Kunnapalli, Adichilli, Mathiramittani and Palapalli, came to limelight in 1962 when it was adjudged as the best panchayat in the country.

We reached the paddy fields which were golden ripe. I felt they were beckoning me. They seemed to say, "Come, we are prepared to give you a feast for Onam here." Then there were series of banana trees which were fully laden with bananas.

"Is Melur Panchayat the home of plantains?", I asked. "Not only Melur but the entire district is a famous home of plantains", came the proud reply from the Village Level Worker. "In this fertile land, they grow in abundance."

The jeep was running on the road with creepers and small plants on either side. At a little distance, a small calf hearing the sound of the jeep jumped out. In an instant, it fell into the big trench nearby. Immediately, the president stopped the car and ran to the trench. He lifted the calf.

"What we want most are two things—enough of water for the farmers and good road," said a peasant whom we met. "Fortunately, we are having them both. We get enough water from the Chalakudy Dam and because of the hard work of Melur Panchayat we are having enough roads."

Our jeep stopped in front of a big building in a spacious compound. "Let us get down here. This is our primary health centre", the president said. Three rooms and a verandah. The villagers contributed land, money and labour for its construction.

I also saw public wells dug here and there through public cooperation and donations. On one bank of the broad Chalakudy river a bathing ghat has been recently constructed. There are enough facilities for taking a convenient bath. About four bathing ghats have been built in the Melur Panchayat.

To sum up the achievements of the Melur Panchayat it would be sufficient to point out that the Panchayat had constructed 20½ miles ordinary road, 4½ miles metalled roads, one primary health centre, many culverts and bunds, 4 bathing ghats, one cattle pound, four ponds, etc. The total expenditure in this regard, besides shramdan etc. was of the order of Rs. 11.16 lakhs, of which Rs. 39,825 and land worth Rs. 7,500 were contributed by the people. This indicates what can be done by the people in developing their own village.

"I believe that I have done my level best to help the small farmers to reach their present standard of living," the president said. And I believed him. Those full grown paddy fields bore testimonials to that.

Ten years ago, people were ignorant of improved methods of farming. But now they take interest in them. About 1,290 acres of paddy fields and 3,637 acres of raised lands are there. Because of the Chalakudy Irrigation Project there is no scarcity of water. Improved seeds are used for cultivation. Green manure plants are grown all round. Chemical fertilizers are also available. There are 1,086 compost pits in the area of the Panchayat. About 2,000 tons of chemical fertilizers have been distributed; besides pesticides and other requirements are also being provided. Japanese method of paddy cultivation is being done in about 900 acres of land.

Banana plantation is another source of income among the small farmers. In about 225 acres of land this is being cultivated. There is a mixture now being used as fertilizer for this plantation. There is enough scope for development in this field. The beautiful coconut trees with round coconuts from their head is a sight to see. Arecanut trees are also seen off and on. About 2,000 improved seedlings of coconut and about 20,000 of arecanut have been distributed among the farmers.

Besides tapioca, rubber, pepper, lemon grass, beans etc. are also being cultivated. Animal husbandry is a part and parcel of farming. Farmers are interested in developing the cattle wealth; because of the help rendered by the government in this field, some improvement could be effected in the cattle wealth. Poultry development is also being made.

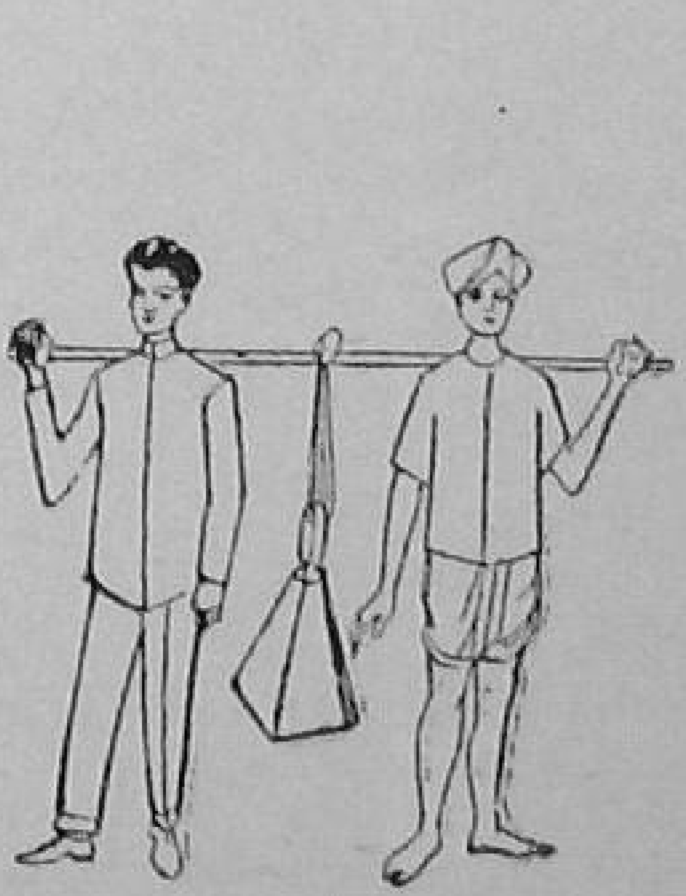
The Panchayat which was a little backward in education has now six lower primary schools and three upper primary schools but the absence of a high school is being felt. There are six sports clubs and two Mahila clubs in the area.

The office of the Panchayat is situated in a compound near the road in a beautiful small building. One meeting hall and a verandah adorns a large number of rooms in the building. About Rs. 15,000 can be assessed as the value for that building.

"If we have been able to achieve anything it is not due to my own efforts. It is all due to the cooperation and effort of all our people?" the president said with emotion. Later, a member of the Panchayat told me, "So far, I had not to oppose anything for coming to a decision on a right thing; we have no caste, creed, politics or any other difference. Besides, we are sure that our president will never do a wrong thing. We strive united for the betterment of our future generation."

I found it difficult to take leave of the president and members of the Panchayat. Melur and its people have a hypnotic spell on any visitor. I wished our country had Melurs at its every nook and corner.

(Courtesy : 'Panchayati Raj', Kerala)



WAR ON WANT IN MANDWA VILLAGE

V. R. KULKARNI

PEOPLE WHO refuse to believe that rural people can plan to increase their income or to ameliorate their living conditions return with a changed mind after their visit to Mandwa village.

Mandwa is a small village in Aurangabad district of Maharashtra with a population of about 800 and nearly 100 families. From Jalna one has to go about seven miles on a main road and about three miles on an approach road which has been made through voluntary labour of the villagers.

The wonderful thing about the development of this village is that it has a plan of its own, which fits into our bigger national plan. According to this village plan, the people of Mandwa are determined to double the village income in a very short period.

There are several agencies, local and even foreign, which are acting as a fountain-head to generate the zeal and to provide scientific and technological guidance and material resources, necessary to formulate and implement this ambitious and comprehensive project. The local agencies include the Jalna Panchayat Samiti, District Cooperative Land Development Bank, Aurangabad, Gram Sevak Training Centre, Jalna and the Jalna Rotary Club.

In fact, this village has been adopted by the Jalna Rotary Club for community welfare work. Two of its members, Shri B. R. Barwale, who is himself a progressive cultivator and Shri C. B. Sastry, President of the Club, have identified themselves with the project and the villagers. They want to show to the people that with proper facilities offered to the villagers and sound leadership, villages can be helped to rise to great heights. They also believe that farms are as vital as arms to the nation and with this conviction, they are devoting themselves to the task of developing farms of the village.

The Rotary Club of Cleaveland, U.S.A. and the War on Want, a world organisation have also shown keen interest in the development project of this village. The former has sent a donation of 500 dollars to help the villagers to solve their drinking water problem and the latter has undertaken to help them dig wells for irrigating their fields at a very moderate cost.

The irrigation project is the core of the development plan of the village. There were hardly half a dozen fortunate cultivators in the village who had wells on their farms. They were harvesting better crops and could live better than the rest of their fellow cultivators. One fine morning, some of the villagers thought, "Why should every family not have a well on its farm? Would it be possible for every one to dig a well, to strike water, get better crops and live more happily? Why not?" And the most powerful, productive and nuclear project of digging wells emerged out of this loud thinking.

Mandwa has now become a village of wells. Almost every family is having a well. Some have struck forceful springs of water. Out of these springs, is not gushing out water alone which makes seeds germinate, crops grow and pacify thirst of the land. Far more than that. These springs are generating hopes of better life, creating physical and mental strength.

The wells are only one of the several schemes undertaken or proposed to be undertaken. A new school building is almost complete. An approach road is half completed. A Service Cooperative has been formed. Oil engines and pumps are being ordered. There is an unending list of such schemes. It will take a number of years for their implementation although the villagers and the rotarians are in a hurry to complete all of them as quickly as possible.

For two years the rotarians were trying to create an urge among the villagers to improve their lot, sponsored a number of schemes but they were disappointed. They were not getting adequate response. It was like trying to dig a hard and dry rock of the Sahyadris without getting water. At last irrigation wells brought about the change. The villagers are now keen about improving their lot and they feel confident that they would be able to do so.

KEREVELLI

BEST VILLAGE IN TELANGANA

P. N. V. RAO

KEREVELLI, a small village of about one thousand five hundred souls in Hyderabad district hit the headlines in 1963 when it was adjudged the best panchayat in the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh and received the Government award of Rs. 15,000.

Kerevelli got this distinction for having so many achievements to its credit. Among the villages in the nine districts of Telangana region only Kerevelli Panchayat had the record of cent per cent tax-collection, without any arrears or defaults. The village had also dug 186 compost pits, the largest number dug in a Telangana village in the year. The Gram Panchayat Bank worked successfully. The village had made the maximum use of better implements, fertilizers and other scientific aids to agriculture. It also started an industrial cooperative society for the manufacture of gur. Further, it had the record attendance of 95 per cent at the six-member panchayat meetings.

Contributing one-fourth of the cost of a four-mile metalled road, Kerevelli raced against time to complete a vital communication link with the nearest rail town of Vikarabad on the Hyderabad-Bombay line, passing through the green Anantagiri Valley and girding a popular health centre of the same name. Kerevelli, (a name said to be derived from a Kannada and Telugu compound—*Kere* and *Velli*—meaning a tank that is pure-white), means to re-live its traditional fame.

This small village linked itself emotionally to the national cause by contributing Rs. 1,425 to the National Defence Fund, a rupee per head of its population. According to the Block Development Officer, Kerevelli has been able to establish this spectacular record in village self-government due to the total absence of groupism and the respect every one has for the Sarpanch of the Panchayat.

The Sarpanch himself, a typical Telugu village-man and a farmer by profession, is averse to appropriating credit to himself, and points to his team of six "good Samaritans", saying that their assistance is always available to him.

He has praise, too, for the UNICEF which is providing free mid-day meals to the 120 boys and girls in the Panchayat School.

The Village Chief also alludes to the Mahila Mandal, as an example of the "new look" of women-folk in the village.

"Give us power and we will do the job", the village leader said. He meant electric power to replace the dozen odd kerosene lamps that now dimly light his village streets by night—power to operate water-pump, and power to start small industries.

"How we like having electricity for making our lives healthier, wealtheir and happier", he reflected, stretching his gaze across the plains and on to the rail-head beyond the valley, where life moves faster under more civilised conditions.

"Give us power and more power", was also the village leader's prayer on Dusserah Day. It was on this day in 1959 that Kerevelli Panchayat was born.

"The award is a challenge and an opportunity for us to do better in the coming year", said the Sarpanch, and added, "in earnest of our desire to match the prize money with greater contribution by ourselves, everyone in our village has voluntarily and unanimously agreed to pay 50 per cent more as land and profession tax this year."

In 1962, the Panchayat got Rs. 1,130 as land tax from 910 acres of cultivated land, besides a grant of Rs. 1,000 from the State Government.

The Panchayat office, for which a farmer gave the site free, also is the centre of community listening, Radio Rural Forum and the Yuvak Mandali activities.

Kerevelli is a symbol of self-help. It is the concrete realisation of the ideals of community development. With the course of time its march towards prosperity will be speedier, its path will be more smooth and its present people will be remembered by their future generations with gratitude and respect.

PANCHAYATS IN LAHAUL

I. BHATNAGAR

Vegetable seller of Lahaul

PANCHAYATI RAJ at Lahaul and Spiti, situated against the backdrop of the mighty Himalayas in the Punjab, has a chequered history. Before independence Lahaul received little attention from the Government. Prior to the appointment of a Naib-Tahsildar and setting up of a police post at Keylong after 1940, the administration of the area was run through the agency of the Wazir of Lahaul. The spheres of administration were the preservation of law and order, land revenue and forest management. The office ot the Wazir was a powerful one. He had a free hand under the limited supervision by the Assistant Commissioner, Kulu.

Thirteen Panchayats as regularly-constituted bodies, consisting of the periodically-elected representatives of the people, entrusted with developmental, civic, administrative and judicial functions and armed with power under an Act of the legislature came into being in Lahaul as late as November 1944. The fourteenth Panchayat—Khoksar Panchayat—of the region was formed in October 1945.

The territorial jurisdiction of the Panchayats corresponded to the boundaries of their respective revenue estates or *kothis*. Thus up to 1961, the 14 revenue estates of Lahaul had 14 Panchayats. At the time of the 1961 Panchayat elections, the Jahlman Panchayat, which was compartively a large Panchayat, was split into two and the Mooring Panchayat came into existence as the 15th Panchayat of Lahaul.

The Punjab Gram Panchayat Act of 1952 as amended up to 1960 provides for the establishment of a Panchayat in every village with a population of not less than 500. Small villages are so grouped that the population is not less than 500. For Lahaul, however, the population criterion has been ignored on account of its small population scattered in many villages.

Each Panchayat, as it is constituted at present, consists of five or more members, including the Sarpanch, according to the population and strength of the Panchayat members, fixed and notified by Government. Members are elected every five years through universal adult franchise.

Representation of the Scheduled Castes and women on the Panchayats has been specially ensured by the Act of 1952. However, the women of Lahaul do not come forward to participate in the elections. They are as yet not keen to work as Panches even if co-opted. Up to 1960 there was no woman-Panch in any of the Panchayats of Lahaul. All efforts are being made to see that they also are encouraged to associate themselves with the Panchayats.

Up to October 1960, there was one paid Secretary for all the 14 Panchayats of Lahaul. Since then this work has been entrusted as an honorary duty to the Village Level Workers of the National Extension Service Block, Lahaul. The Panchayats are supervised by the Social Education and Panchayat Officer of the Block, and the Block Development and Panchayat Officer who co-ordinate the work of the Panchayats.

SOURCES OF INCOME

The main sources of income of the Panchayats are taxes, income from *Shamlat Deh*, land revenue grant, grants from the N.E.S. and T.D. Blocks, grant from the various departments of Government, and voluntary contributions. The income from the first three sources is naturally very limited on account of small population and even smaller cultivated area. The income from the remaining sources, however, has been substantial, especially from 1960 onwards. The in-

come of the Panchayats in 1961-62 and 1962-63 was Rs. 2,18,883 and Rs. 1,65,069 respectively as compared to Rs. 4,796 in 1950-51.

With this income, the Panchayats have been greatly strengthened and have been able to do multifarious development work in practically every field, including communications, irrigation and agriculture, education, rural health and sanitation, social education, cooperation and animal husbandry.

There are no Nyaya Panchayats. The Gram Panchayats, however, have criminal judicial powers under the Act. Regarding civil and revenue judicial powers, they are empowered to try suits of some specified classes. The pecuniary limits of their jurisdiction in respect of these classes of civil and revenue judicial suits are Rs. 200 and Rs. 100, respectively.

ELECTIONS

Elections to the Panchayats have never aroused keen contests. In fact, all the elections so far have been unanimous. The reasons for this are many. Panchayats as a form of rural self-government are rather new to the area as these were introduced towards the fag-end of the British rule. Even in the immediate post-independence period when a beginning towards planned economic development had not yet been made, it was natural that their importance and utility as agencies of rural development were little known to the people. Besides, the fact that there are only six working months in a year also to some extent leaves little time for the people to be able to devote themselves to the Panchayati work. Till the opening of the N.E.S. and T.D. blocks and the stepping up of developmental expenditure during the Third Plan period, the Panchayats with their meagre incomes and resources were just not in a position to do much tangible work.

GROWING INTEREST

However, during the last five years popular indifference towards Panchayats has given place to a growing interest in them. The opening of the N.E.S. Block in 1958 and that of the T.D. Block in 1961, and the vastly increased tempo of development expenditure through various departments have demonstrated to the people that if full advantage is to be derived from all this, there is no better agency than the Panchayats through which alone it is possible to assess and express their needs and organise and promote their betterment.

Unlike the other districts of the State, Panchayati Raj has not been introduced *in toto* in this district for certain reasons. This is because its two subdivisions, Lahaul and Spiti, are wide apart and remain cut off from each other for eight months in a year. If a Zila Parishad were to be formed, the representatives from Lahaul and Spiti cannot get together for more than once a year. There is little point in having Panchayat Samitis for Lahaul and Spiti—without a Zila Parishad. In addition to this, there is a statutory-elected body for this district called the Punjab Tribes Advisory Council which meets twice a year and is usually presided over by the Chief Minister, Punjab, himself who is its *ex-officio* Chairman. These meetings are attended by all the concerned Heads of Departments and sometimes even by the Administrative Secretaries in whose presence important decisions are taken on the advice of the Council Members and progress in their implementation is reviewed. This more than meets the needs of the area and with a separate agency like the Zila Parishad there is likelihood of over-lapping and want of co-ordination. Nevertheless, in order to associate the Panchayats with the Punjab Tribes Advisory Council election rules regarding the latter have been so amended as to provide for the election of one Sarpanch each from Lahaul and Spiti to the Advisory Council.

SPITIANS

The Spitians with the President, Dr. Radhakrishnan

Vice-President, Dr. Zakir Hussain witnessing a folk dance performance by the members of the party

THIRTY-ONE Spitians visited the Capital recently. The tour, which was the first in their life outside their rugged and barren but irresistibly charming homeland Spiti, was arranged by an energetic Social Education and Panchayat Officer of the Government of the Punjab.

Before coming to Delhi, the party was taken to the various places of interest in Himachal Pradesh and the Punjab. During their stay in the Capital the Spitians called on the President, Dr. Radhakrishnan whom they delighted with a folk-dance. They also presented a scarf and a cap to the President.

Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri with the party

VISIT

DELHI

Three beautiful girls of the party at Mughal Gardens in Rashtrapati Bhawan

Later the members of the party paid a visit to the Vice-President, Dr. Zakir Hussain and Prime Minister Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri.

The Spitians were taken round in Delhi and they visited Rajghat, Shanti Vana, the Buddha Vihar, Qutb Minar, Red Fort and Lakshmi Narain Temple. They also saw the Zoo.

For all of them Delhi offered so many 'firsts' in their life. For the first time they saw a huge locomotive crossing the bridge on the river Jamuna. For the first time they saw a buffalo, a camel, an ostritch, a pressure cooker, and so on.

They left Delhi with bags full of stories to tell other Spitians. Though illiteracy is reigning supreme in Spiti, efforts are now being made to bring the people to light. The schools are being opened and boys and girls in Spiti are showing eagerness to learn. The State Government has given facilities for free education and free boarding and lodging in hostels for students. Among the members of the party that visited the Capital, there were three students who wanted to take teaching as a career. This shows that the younger generation is determined to wipe away the evil of illiteracy from Spiti.

—**L. K. Bakshi**

Girls are studying the places of interest to be visited in Delhi

SOLUTION OF FARMER'S PROBLEMS

Mandya Cooperative Shows the Way

THE FARMERS of Mandya Taluk in Mandya district of Mysore have been freed for ever from the exploitation of the middleman. This has been possible through the organisation by the farmers of a strong effective cooperative which is the sole buyer and seller of their produce. This has enabled them not only to have a fair price when they sell their produce but also a fair deal whenever they buy their requirements.

This exemplary accomplishment of the Mandya Ryot's Agricultural Produce Cooperative Marketing Society—as the society is known—is the climax of a story which began nearly seventeen years ago. It was in 1948 when some prominent farm leaders of Mandya decided to put an end to the miserable plight of the farmers. They rightly realised that the prevalent scarcity of goods was mostly created by middleman and to get rid of him was the only way of saving the farmers. Out of this realisation was born Ryots' Multi-purpose Cooperative Society with Mandya Taluk as its jurisdiction. Later, the Society also took up the marketing and processing activities and changed its name to the Ryots' Agricultural Produce Cooperative Marketing Society Limited.

Since its inception the Society has aimed at providing the farmer "with all that he needs" and getting him "a fair price for his produce". Within a short period, the Society has been able to organise its supply operations so well that today it is supplying more than 2,000 different items which include all agricultural implements, insecticides, pesticides, fertilizers, seed, steel, cement, cloth, sugar, salt, kerosene, etc., to the farmers. The Society deals directly with the manufacturers and acts as their wholesale agent. This not only ensures the supply at the right time and in adequate quantities, but also saves for the farmer the profits of the middleman. Forty service cooperative societies have been organised in the rural areas of the Taluk at the rate of one society for each Panchayat besides six large-sized cooperative societies. They are acting as retail agents of this Society for distribution of seeds, chemical fertilizers and iron and steel under agricultural quota. In 1962-63 these societies disbursed short-term credit and medium-term loans to the extent of Rs. 19,00,000 and have distributed chemical fertilizers to the tune of 7,500 tons.

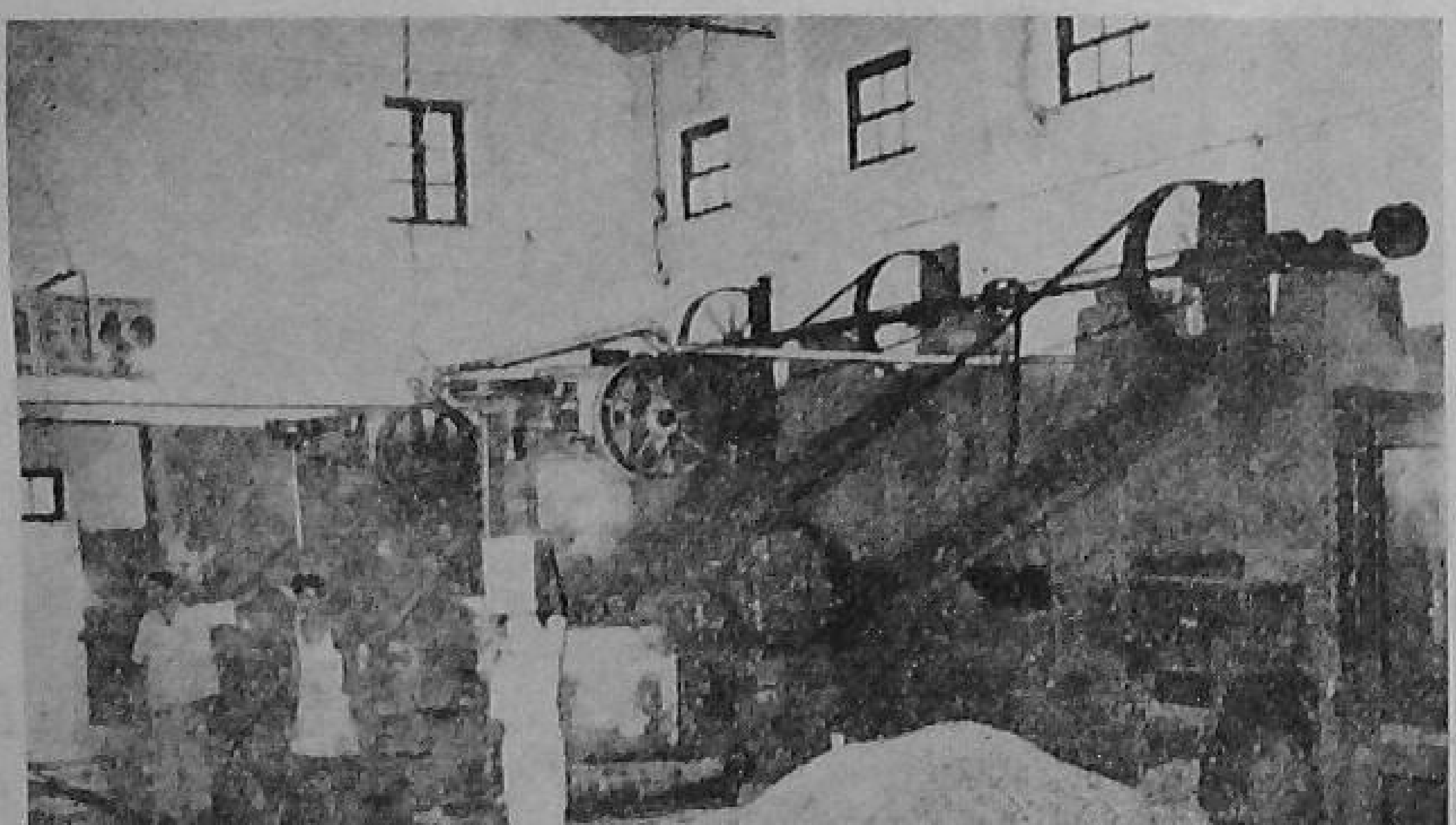
STORAGE FACILITIES

The Society also provides storage facilities to the farmers for their agricultural produce. Fifty small godowns and seven big godowns have been constructed for this purpose. Nearly 50,000 quintals paddy and 25,000 quintals of groundnuts were stored in these godowns on behalf of the farmers in 1962-63.

To ensure better prices and returns for the agricultural produce the Society took up processing activities along with marketing. Rice and oil mills have been installed by the Society. For installation of machinery and construction of buildings, drying yard, etc., the Society invested Rs. 5 lakhs.

The Society owns seven transport vehicles. Besides transporting seeds, chemical fertilizers, implements, etc., to the rural societies, these vehicles also carry agricultural produce from villages to the godowns of the Society.

To keep the farmer informed about prices the Society has arranged to get day-to-day auction prices from the various regulated markets like those in Mysore and Channapatra. The market trends are being furnished to the farmers through the service cooperatives everyday by post.



Groundnut processing in progress

OUTRIGHT PURCHASE

To help small farmers the Society purchases their produce outright. Thirty thousand bags of paddy were purchased from small cultivators in 1962-63. The Society is also making purchases of groundnuts and the same are being decorticated and crushed in its mills. The Society supplied 300 tons of groundnut oil to the State Trading Corporation.

The Society has an ambitious programme to manufacture all agricultural implements required by the farmers in the Taluk. It set up a fully equipped workshop in 1962-63. At present it is manufacturing ploughs, levelling plates, seed drills, tramplers, weeders, cultivators and ridgers in this workshop. It plans to start manufacture of hand-sprayers and power-sprayers soon. The manufacture of small tractors is also in the list of activities to be undertaken in future. During 1962-63 implements worth more than Rs. 92,000 were produced and sold to the farmers of the Taluk.

Retail store selling consumer goods and implements

With a view to initiating farmers into balanced fertilising, the Society has started preparing standard fertilizer mixtures for various crops. The mixtures are prepared in accordance with the specifications prescribed by the Department of Agriculture. It prepared nearly 5,000 tons of fertilizer mixtures in 1963-64. The Society also arranges fertilizer demonstrations on farmers' fields to promote fertilizer use.

To help farmers build their own houses and cattle sheds, the Society is supplying house building materials such as cement, iron window bars, zinc sheets, etc.

A section of a retail store selling weigh bridges and plant protection equipment

SOCIAL WELFARE ACTIVITIES

The Society plays a prominent role in welfare activities. It has assisted in the construction of a general hostel at Mandya for providing educational facilities to the students of the Taluk. It has also drawn up a programme for assisting the Balamandirs (Children Homes) in the rural area. A sum of Rs. 1,500 is being donated for the purpose of constructing a building along with the assistance of the Taluk Board to house these Balamandirs. To achieve this objective the Society has already created a separate charitable fund of Rs. 16,000 out of the net profits. The Society donated in 1962-63 a sum of Rs. 30,000 to the People's Education Society of Mandya for establishing an engineering college. A guest house is being maintained by the Society for the use of farmers visiting the Taluk and District Headquarters at Mandya.

The Society has been able to attain this spectacular success due to the missionary zeal of its leaders. It has proved that cooperation is the best means to attain prosperity. It has become a model for all the new societies that are coming into existence in Mysore. It is indeed a good model for any cooperative society anywhere in the country to follow.

Fresh supplies of fertilizers arriving at the main godown of the Society

GHOGHA—A MODEL COOPERATIVE

R. N. GUPTA

"My dream of a true village cooperative which along with the Panchayat and a school can provide the solid foundation for a self-propelling economic revolution in the village is that it should be a real multi-purpose society providing all the requisites for increased agricultural production and serving the vital day-to-day needs of the people in an honest and efficient manner", said the late Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru while addressing a meeting of cooperators in a village near Delhi.

In a small village named Ghogha, in Alipur Block, about 22 miles from the Capital, which I visited recently, I was agreeably surprised to come across a society which fulfils all the requirements of a true village cooperative envisaged by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru.

Incidentally, Alipur is the village which was selected for the inauguration of the Community Development programme in India (October 2, 1952) and where Shri Nehru in dedicating this movement to the nation said, "I hope this village will blaze the trail for a new revolution in the economic life of India."

Since then Alipur has really become a laboratory for varied experiments in rural reconstruction, not the least important of which is the cooperative sector.

The Ghogha village cooperative was registered in July 1937 as a credit society with a membership of 13 and share capital of Rs. 130 only. Till 1947, it was like any other credit society doling out minor loans to the small body of its members.

Then in the year 1947, the society was taken up under revitalization programme and provided loans and subsidy to the extent of Rs. 7,000. In 1957, it was changed into a multi-purpose large-sized society and provided share capital participation by the Government to the extent of Rs. 10,000. In 1961, it was also permitted to undertake transport business and granted a route permit for running a passenger bus between Ghogha and Delhi. In July 1964, it was granted another route permit to run buses between Narela and Bahadurgarh.

The Society has at present a membership of 218 covering all agricultural families in the village, a paid-up capital of Rs. 30,000 (including Rs. 10,000 provided by Government), owned funds to the extent of Rs. 70,000, a total business turn over of about Rs. 4 lakhs, advances totalling Rs. 40,000 and deposits from members exceeding Rs. 42,000. In the year 1963-64, it earned net profit to the extent of Rs. 16,056.

FULL-TIME STAFF

In India, there are few village societies which are run by more than one or two part-time workers. The Ghogha Society, however, has a full-time staff of 21 and a part-time staff of 9 persons. It owns a flour mill, a cane crusher, a gur and khandsari plant, a chaff cutting machine, blade sharpening machine and a ginning mill. It also deals in fertilizers, insecticides, agricultural implements, seeds, kerosene oil and most consumer goods. In fact, it tries to cater to all the varied needs of the villagers and takes particular care to provide them the needed agricultural aids for increased production.

The Society has tried to utilize the profits in catering to the felt needs of the village people. It constructed for example, a pucca thoroughfare to connect the village with the main road. It provided at its own cost a brick pavement for village streets. It provided cool drinking water for all people passing through the main G.T. Road near the village. It has also helped in constructing the building for the primary school in the village. It has in stock 20 warm beddings, which are available for use of the guests of the members visiting the village. It also owns 100 pairs of brass utensils which are loaned out to members at the time of marriage or other social functions. It supplies free blankets and cotton quilts to poor Harijans. It has employed two watchmen in the village. The Society's flour mill takes only one paisa a kilo as grinding charges against the normal rate of two to three paise a kilo in nearby markets. It purchases sugarcane from members at Rs. 2.50 for 40 kilograms as against the normal rate of Rs. 2 for 40 kilograms in sugar mills. It has a reading room and a radio set in its building which are freely made use of by all the families in the village.

The members of the Society get certain special facilities. They are given preference in the supply of essential consumer goods in short supply. They also get the benefit of prior allotment of seeds and fertilizers. The buses owned by the Society also provide free rides to the members for short distances.

The Society plans to have a cooperative farm and a vegetable farm. It also encourages its members to take to animal husbandry, dairy farming and small industrial cooperatives. It is also considering to provide scholarships, freeships, and books to all poor students reading in the local school, so that none may be denied the benefit of education at Ghogha or its periphery.

NEW LIFE TO A VILLAGE

Social Education Centre's Contribution

GODKHALI KURMIPARA is a small village in the district of Nadia of West Bengal on the bank of the Ganga. The inhabitants are Mahatos, whose forefathers migrated to the village from Bihar. They are mostly landless agricultural labourers and economically most backward.

They had been traditionally averse to education and hardly had sent their children to schools. But this could not go on for ever. Why should they be left in darkness of ignorance when their brethren all over the country are marching triumphantly to light, to progress!

It is really fascinating to note that the Social Education Centre, set up at the village under the auspices of the local Community Development Block has evoked interest among adult illiterates of the village. On an average 25 adults daily assemble at the centre. After the day's toil, they come to the Centre with the eagerness of a student to receive all sorts of training. A learner's face beams with joy when he can correctly write his name in big letters on the slate.

The Centre is a place of relaxation also for the adult students. They come here and enjoy community smoking and of course the fascinating gossip. But it is not a place for idle gossips only. Here they listen to the stories of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata*. Some advanced students read out and the members listen to it with religious devotion. Some times they also sing *bhajans*.

The villagers also discuss about their problems at the Centre. Here they receive information as to how to control pests of jute and vegetables by using modern insecticides. They take keen interest in scientific measures to increase production of food.

The Social Education Centre is gradually assuming more importance in the village life, because it is not only a place for relaxation for the villagers but also a place where the villagers get solutions of their daily problems. Through this Centre, they are gradually receiving the light of the modern world.

That the traditional ideas of the villagers can be changed only by the activities of organisations like Social Education Centres, has been rightly proved by the village Godkhali Kurmipara.

The adult literacy class at Godkhali Kurmipara in progress

POOR BOYS' HOSTEL AT NARONA

Role of a Village Boy

B. A. SANADI

THIS IS the story of Bhagwan Singh of Narona village in Gulbarga district of Mysore. An ordinary boy with an interesting tale to tell.

I had gone to the village to arrange for a film show. After the show was over a boy of about twelve approached me and asked, "Has Nehruji left us once for all?"

I was surprised. How could a boy of his age put such a silly question after seeing a film on the funeral of the departed leader! I had a second look at him. A pair of vague misty eyes. Perhaps he was a numbskull, I thought.

"Yes, my boy. He has left us once for all," I replied.

He looked blank for a while then he shot another question, "Will you go back in this dark night?"

"Oh no", I said, "but why? Do you intend to invite me to your house for dinner?"

The boy kept quiet. Perhaps he was thinking whether it would be proper for him to take a stranger home or not.

"Well, who is your father?" I asked.

"My father has left me once for all," he replied.

I was sorry for him. "Whom do you stay with then?" I asked.

"My father of course," he said with a smile.

I was non-plussed. I looked at the Secretary of the village Panchayat for enlightenment. What he told was something unbelievable. That boy appeared to be a little hero—one of the million heroes of modern *Mahabharata*.

Bhagwan Singh, that was the name of the boy, lost his mother when he was a child of three. His father Ram Singh tried to bring him up as comfortably as possible.

Bhagwan Singh's mental growth could not keep pace with the physical one. He was sent to the school but he could not learn anything. There was no arrangement in the village to teach the mentally retarded children.

Ram Singh had saved about Rs. 2,500 as a future provision for his son. But he did not know how to invest it in a profitable concern to ensure a regular income for Bhagwan Singh.

Days passed on. Ram Singh was getting old. He was constantly worried for his son. One day he fell ill. When it took a bad turn Ram Singh sent for the chairman and members of the village panchayat.

When they came Ram Singh entreated the chairman to take care of his son and the money he had saved. He requested that his son might be treated like a child of the village panchayat and the interest earned on his savings utilised in the maintenance of the Poor Boys' Hostel recently started in the village.

Ram Singh felt greatly relieved when the Panchayat readily accepted his proposal. After so many years his mind was freed from worries. One day he breathed his last. Bhagwan Singh was told that his father had left him once for all.

Bhagwan Singh found shelter in the Poor Boys' Hostel. He is now the forty-first inmate of the hostel. In constant company of other boys he is gradually improving. He takes keen interest in kitchen and kitchen garden. Perhaps one day he would become one of the workers in the hostel.

The Panchayat utilises the money left by Ram Singh in giving credit to the villagers which brings an interest of Rs. 40 per month. This amount is spent for the maintenance of the hostel. So Bhagwan Singh pays one rupee per head per month for the lodging and boarding of 40 inmates. The Panchayat takes pride in adapting a child like Bhagwan Singh.

FROM HERE AND THERE

HARIANA PULSATES WITH NEW LIFE

The Hariana area known as "the arid zone" of Punjab, has begun pulsating with new life since Independence. The region, which was mostly a sandy and barren parched land before Independence, is now rich with bumper crops. This transformation was due to the irrigation provided by the Bhakra system.

The sandy and barren lands of Gurgaon and Mohindergarh will also flourish as soon as the Western Jamuna Irrigation System is extended further to cover these areas and schemes like the Rewari Lift Irrigation Scheme are fully completed.

There has been marked increase in the production of all agricultural commodities, including foodgrains, cotton and sugarcane during the last twelve years. The Hariana area produced 25.66 lakh tons of foodgrains in 1962-63 as against 11.86 lakh tons in 1950-51, showing an impressive increase of 125 per cent. The production of cotton rose from 50,000 to 1,49,000 bales and sugarcane production registered an increase of 134 per cent from 1,90,000 to 4,45,000 tons during this period.

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SUGARCANE YIELD COMPETITION IN BUNDI DISTRICT

Shri Pola Singh, a farmer of Prempura village in Bundi district of Rajasthan has been awarded first prize of Rs. 150 in the district level competition for sugarcane production. He has produced 1,352 mds. of sugarcane on one acre of land.

Shri Habu Mali of Keshoraipatan and Shri Buddhilal of Ishwar village have stood second and third respectively in the competition.

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DISTRICT LEVEL OFFICERS TO ATTEND PANCHAYAT SAMITI

The Rajasthan Government has directed all the district level officers to attend at least two meetings of every Panchayat Samiti of the district to promote better coordination in regard to the various programmes. The district level officers will send a progress report to the Zila Parishad and to the District Development Officer.

The district level officers will also tour the Panchayat Samiti areas according to a schedule so that the Extension Officers can get the necessary technical guidance.

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'UDYAN PANDIT' AWARD

In the All-India Competition for 1964 in Mandarin Orange growing, a Maharashtra farmer Shri V. K. Kale was selected for the award of 'Udyan Pandit'.

Shri Kale's orchard at Warud in the Morshi Taluka of Amravati District was adjudged as the best Mandarin Orange orchard among those that entered the competition, by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Shri Kale received a silver medal plated with gold, a certificate of 'Udyan Pandit' in Mandarin Orange growing, and a cash prize of Rs. 5,000 in the form of Government Bonds.

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ALL INDIA VANAMAHOTSAVA PRIZE

ON THE RESULTS of tree planting during the Vana Mahotsava, 1961, Boroj Village of Bhagwanpur Block II, in the district of Midnapore of West Bengal has been adjudged the best village in the country and awarded the All-India Jawahar Shield.

The village, with an area of 237.68 acres, planted a total number of 86,076 trees, of which 75,060 trees were reported to have survived, the percentage of survival being 87.

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HIGHEST YIELD OF SUGARCANE

THE HIGHEST yield of sugarcane per acre in Uttar Pradesh this year has been recorded by the Chori Farm attached to the Anandnagar Sugar Factory in district Gorakhpur, which has produced 2,681 maunds of sugarcane per acre. The Farm used B.O. 17 variety of caneseed to achieve this spectacular produce, which has recorded an increase of 260 maunds per acre over the highest per acre production of sugarcane achieved so far.

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RAJYA KALASH FOR BILASPUR

BILASPUR DISTRICT of Himachal Pradesh has won the Rajya Kalash for recording 42 per cent increase in food

production during 1961-62 over the average production during the preceding three years.

Earlier the Pradesh was awarded both the Rashtra Kalash and the Rajya Kalash in 1959 kharif crop. Chamba district had then won the Rajya Kalash for registering highest increase in agricultural output in any single district in the country.

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BUDGET FOR PUMPING SETS

The Piprali Panchayat Samiti in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan has provided a sum of Rs. 1 lakh in its budget for 1965-66 for disbursement as loan to farmers for installing pumping sets. The budget of Rs. 6,22,504 has been approved by the Samiti.

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PANCHAYAT WEEK OBSERVED

The Panchayat Week was observed throughout Madhya Pradesh from March 1 to 7, 1965. The objects of the celebration were to acquaint the rural people with the form and role of panchayat institutions, to enlist popular cooperation in recovering the revenue dues and in taking up various local development activities, to promote understanding and contacts between the Government personnel, legislators, panches and the people and to enthuse villagers to solve their problems in a spirit of amity.

The Panchayat Week is being observed in the State since 1952 and has become immensely popular in the rural areas. During the 'Week' development activities like construction and renovation of roads, tanks, wells, soak pits etc. are undertaken by panchayats. Discussions are arranged between groups of farmers. Revenue recovery drives are organised and sports meets are held. The seven panchayats whose performance is adjudged best in the State are given awards by the Government.

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RURAL DEVELOPMENT WORK

At an impressive function, organised in connection with the Panchayat Week celebrations under the auspices of the Block Development Committee of Morar, Gwalior district of Madhya Pradesh at Jakhara village a purse of Rs. 1,500 was presented to the Collector on behalf of Jakhara Gram Panchayat for construction of a building to house a middle school.

The villagers contributed Rs. 1,000 in the shape of material and promised to do shramdan worth Rs. 500. The Collector laid the foundation stone of the middle school building to be constructed at a cost of Rs. 6,000.

The villagers of gram Mohamedpur also presented a purse of Rs. 500 to the Collector for construction of a primary school building in Mohmedpur. They also promised to do shramdan worth Rs. 1,000. The villagers of Hastinapur undertook to construct extension building to house higher secondary school through voluntary labour. The Collector laid the foundation stone of the building at Hastinapur and gave away prizes to the students who initiated shramdan drive.

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KESADA VILLAGE GETS PIPED WATER

Piped water supply was inaugurated at village Kesada in Simga Development Block of Raipur district of Madhya Pradesh. The scheme undertaken at an estimated cost of Rs. 32,760 caters to the need of 1,500 people of the village through 13 public taps. Out of the total amount, the local people have contributed Rs. 3,500.

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9063 WELLS IN RECORD TIME

The importance of agricultural production being what it is in our present day conditions, irrigation plays a decisive role in increasing agricultural output. In Madhya Pradesh efforts are in progress to exploit every possible source of irrigation and the people of Shajapur made a history when they succeeded in constructing 9,063 wells in record time. A zonal competition for the construction of wells was organised in the district in which the development blocks Shajapur, Moman Badodiya, Shujalpur, Kalpipal, Agar I and II and Susner participated.

This stupendous achievement is a result of sustained work and close cooperation between the people and Gram Sevaks, Extension and Block Development authorities of the Blocks concerned. Initially the target fixed was the construction of 5,000 wells. But the spirit with which they worked acted as a spur to attain new height resolving in its stride the twin problems of drinking water facility as well as of stepping up production of foodgrains.

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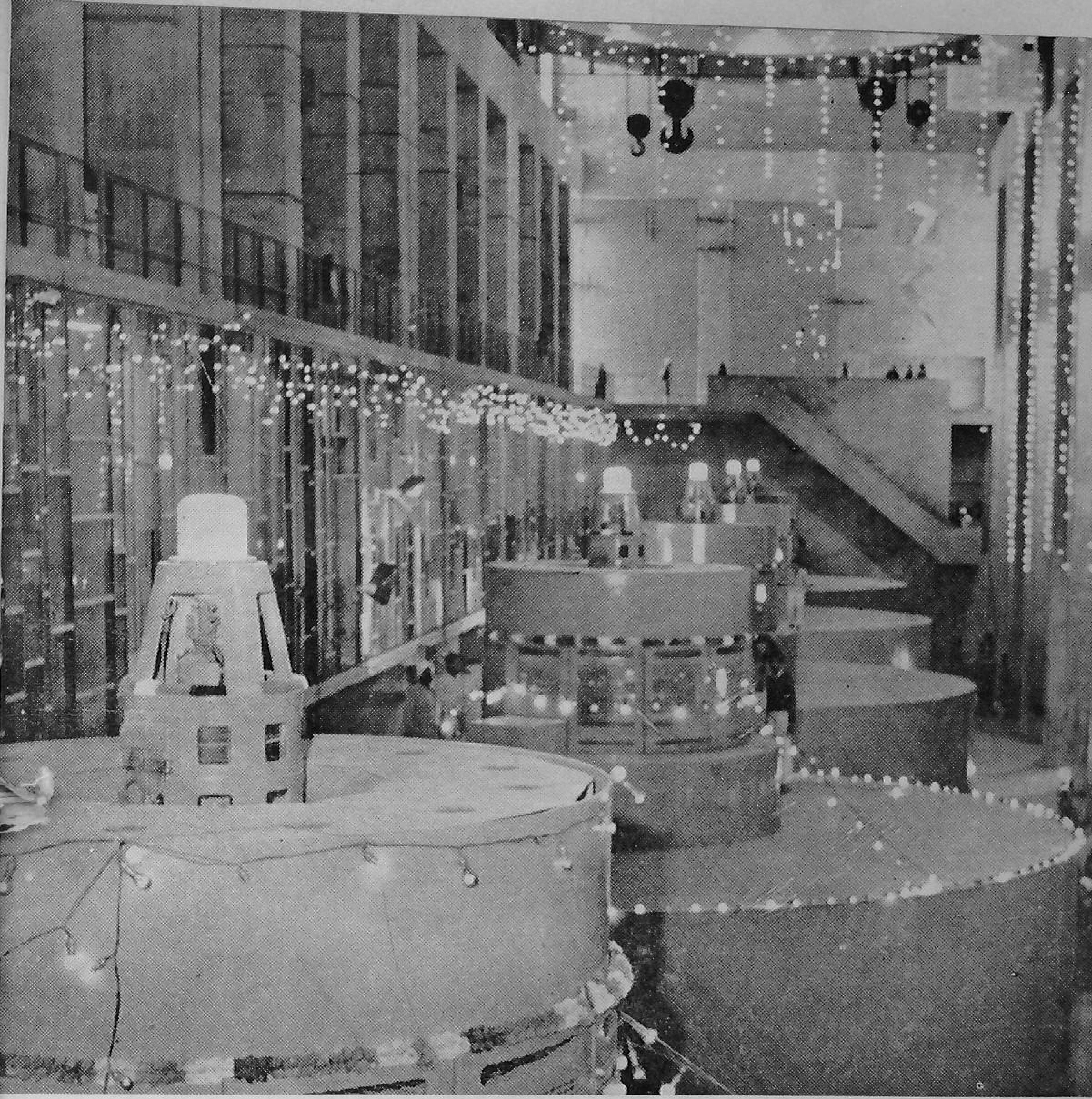
DEVELOPMENT OF FISHERIES

For the rapid development of the fishing industry in the State, the Government of Maharashtra has formulated a crash programme.

During the crash programme steps will be taken to provide trawlers and mechanised tools to the fishermen and set up ice factories for their use. Maharashtra, which is next only to Kerala in respect of the fishing industry, has great potentialities of development with its coastal line of 700 kilometres.



TOWARDS A BETTER TOMORROW

Our country is making modern temples and mosques in the shape of various development projects. Gazing on the tremendous Bhakra-Nangal project in the Punjab where hundreds and thousands had worked, Jawaharlal Nehru felt that the biggest temple and mosque was the place where man worked for the good of mankind. Bhakra-Nangal is one of the many giant projects that have been implemented to usher in a better tomorrow. The garlands of light decorating the power house at Bhakra in this picture symbolise the better living that India is fighting for.

A cultivator of Orissa with his cattle. Panchayats in Orissa are playing an important role in increasing food production.

Printed by the Manager, Government of India Press, Faridabad, and published by the Director, Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Delhi-6, on behalf of the Ministry of Community Development and Co-operation.

Regd. No. D—877.